

Astro2020 Science White Paper

Community Endorsement of the National Academies “Exoplanet Science Strategy” and “Astrobiology Strategy for the Search for Life in the Universe” Reports

Thematic Areas: X Planetary Systems X Star and Planet Formation

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Abstract

The National Academies “Exoplanet Science Strategy” (ESS) and “Astrobiology Strategy for the Search for Life in the Universe” (AbS) reports present timely and consensus assessments of the current status, priorities and recommendations of the exoplanet and astrobiology science communities. We are signing our support for the findings and recommendations contained in the ESS and AbS as representing our consensus input to the Astrophysics 2020 decadal survey.

The ESS and AbS reports are timely, having solicited white papers for input in spring 2018, less than one year prior to the Astro2020 white paper deadline, and released to the public in the fall of 2018, only a half a year prior to the Astro2020 white paper deadline.

By signing this white paper, we are endorsing the findings and recommendations contained therein, and believe they represent the consensus view of the exoplanet and astrobiology communities for our near, medium, and far-term plans for exoplanet and astrobiology science, including the profound goal of the search for life outside the solar system. We offer the report as concise and streamlined input to the National Academy of Science's 2020 decadal survey on these topics. The cosigners of this report are prepared to provide more detailed information on any of the topics discussed in the report, should the decadal survey request it.

We agree with the ESS's affirmation that the answer to one of humanity's greatest questions is within reach. In particular, we back the statements that: "We do not know whether our generation will be the first to learn that life exists elsewhere in the galaxy. What we do know is that we can be the first with the technology, the scientific ability, and the sheer unrelenting drive to take the bold steps toward answering that great question."

References

URL for ESS report:

http://sites.nationalacademies.org/SSB/CurrentProjects/SSB_180659

URL for the AbS report:

<https://www.nap.edu/catalog/25252/an-astrobiology-strategy-for-the-search-for-life-in-the-universe>

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